



Glossary

Access Aisle An accessible pedestrian space between elements, such as parking spaces, seating, and desks, that provides clearances appropriate for use of the elements.

Accessible Route A continuous unobstructed path connecting all accessible elements and spaces of a building or facility. Interior accessible routes may include corridors, floors, ramps, elevators, lifts, and clear floor space at fixtures. Exterior accessible routes may include parking access aisles, curb ramps, crosswalks at vehicular ways, walks, ramps, and lifts.

Accessible Seats Seating or spaces specifically designed for people who use wheelchairs that include features such as an accessible approach, location at grade, clear floor space, and larger dimensions. For information about the number, dimensions, and features of accessible seats see the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Sections 221 and 802. Aisle seats with retractable or removable armrests are called "designated aisle seats" and can be used by some people with disabilities.

(ADA) Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended This federal law prohibits discrimination and stipulates equal participation for people with disabilities in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications.

ADA Coordinator Employee responsible for coordinating the efforts of the government entity to comply with Title II and investigating any complaints that the entity has violated Title II. Also called Accessibility Coordinator or 504 Coordinator (for entities receiving federal funds who must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act).

ADA Notice The obligation of a state and local government and recipients of federal funds to publicly communicate to the public their commitment to comply with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504. The notice should be brief and simple, not lengthy, legalistic, or complicated.

Adaptability The ability of certain building spaces and elements, such as kitchen counters, sinks, and grab bars, to be added or altered to accommodate the needs of people with or without disabilities or to accommodate the needs of persons with different types or degrees of disability.

Alteration. A change to a building or facility that affects or could affect the usability of the building or facility or a portion of it. Alterations include, but are not limited to, remodeling, renovation, rehabilitation, reconstruction, historic restoration, resurfacing of circulation paths or vehicular ways, changes or rearrangement of the structural parts or elements, and changes or rearrangement in the configuration of walls and full-height partitions. Normal maintenance, reroofing, painting or wallpapering, or changes to mechanical and electrical systems are not alterations unless they affect the usability of the building or facility.

[\[http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADASTandards/2010ADASTandards.htm\]](http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADASTandards/2010ADASTandards.htm)

Alternative Formats A practice of ensuring effective written communication. It requires providing information or audio recordings to people unable to use standard print. These include but are not limited to Braille, large print text, digital files, audio recordings, or accessible emails to effectively inform those who are blind or have low vision and people with other disabilities unable to use typical print material.

Ambient Light The total amount of light in a space, including light from direct sources and light reflected from all surfaces in that space. Ambient light in most museum exhibitions is reflective.

Assistive Listening A technology in which a transmitter broadcasts the wanted sound and minimizes background noise and reverberation to the user's receiver and improves the volume and clarify of speech and other sound such as music relative to noise.

Assistive Listening Device (ALD) An audio enhancement system that brings sound directly into the ear for people with or without hearing aid(s)/cochlear implant(s) of someone with hearing limitations. It helps to overcome the problems of distance and of surrounding noise. Refer to ADA 2010 Standards to determine the number of ALDs that must be hearing-aid compatible:

<http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADASTandards/2010ADASTandards.htm#pgfid-1010597>

Assistive Listening Systems (ALS) An amplification system utilizing transmitters, receivers, and coupling devices to bypass the acoustical space between a sound source and a listener by means of audio loop, radio frequency, infrared, or direct-wired equipment.

Assistive Technology Devices used by people with disabilities, including physical, sensory, or cognitive limitations, in order to perform functions that might otherwise be difficult or impossible. Assistive technology can include mobility devices such as walkers and wheelchairs, as well as hardware, software, and peripherals that assist people to increase, maintain, or improve functional capacities.

Audio Description Commentary and narration that guides the listener through the presentation with concise, objective descriptions of new scenes, settings, costumes, and body language and can be done in theaters, museums, videos, and television.

Audio Loop (Induction Loop) Device that uses electromagnetic waves for transmission of sound. The sound from an amplifier is fed into a wire loop surrounding the seating area (or worn on the listener's neck) which broadcasts to a telecoil that serves as a receiver. Hearing aids without a T-switch to activate a telecoil can use a special induction receiver to pick up the sound.

Auxiliary Aids and Services Devices or services that enable effective communication for people with disabilities. Here are some examples of different products and services that may be used to provide effective communication for people with disabilities. This is not an exhaustive list. Not all ways work for all people with disabilities, or even for people with the same condition (e.g., low vision, non-verbal, hard-of-hearing, blind, learning disabilities, developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, cognitive limitations). You must consult with the individual to determine what is effective for him or her. The following examples are not exhaustive and may benefit people with different types of disabilities.

- accessibility settings in operating systems
- assistance filling out forms
- assistive listening system
- audio recordings
- Brailled materials
- open or closed captioning
- communication boards
- compact disc with materials in plain text or Word format
- computer-aided real-time transcription
- description of visually presented materials
- email
- exchange of written notes on paper or tablets
- hearing aid compatible telephones
- large print materials
- notetakers
- qualified interpreters
- remote video interpreting
- screen readers
- Skype or other web-enabled video
- speech synthesizers
- telephone handset amplifiers
- text messaging
- text telephones (TTYs)
- videotext displays
- video interpreting
- video relay

Braille A system of touch reading and writing for blind persons, developed by Louis Braille in the 19th century, in which raised dots represent the letters of the alphabet. Braille also contains equivalents for punctuation marks and provides symbols to show letter groupings.

Cane-detectable Barrier A barrier used to warn people who are blind or have low vision of a hazard. The barrier is an element that a cane user can detect with a cane before the individual reaches the obstruction or hazard with his/her body.

Captioning

Open captioning translates the audio portion of a video or film program into visible subtitles. Viewing does not require special equipment; the captions are present on the screen at all times.

Closed captioning requires a decoder for display on a standard television receiver and can be switched on and off by the visitor on demand. Also, videos that are part of exhibitions may be closed captioned using the symbol with instructions to press a button for captioning.

CART (Computer Assisted Real-Time Transcription) A service in which an operator types what is said into a computer that displays the typed words on a screen, either a computer screen for one person or projected for a group.

Clear Floor Space The minimum unobstructed floor or ground space required to accommodate a single, stationary wheelchair.

Cognitive Disabilities Functional limitations caused by a physical, mental, or emotional condition that cause serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions. (derived from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey)

Commercial Facilities This is a category of places subject to the requirements of ADA Title II in addition to the category of Places of Public Accommodation. **Commercial facilities** are privately owned, nonresidential facilities such as factories, warehouses, or office buildings. Commercial facilities in the cultural sector would include administrative offices and storage facilities for museums or theaters and are subject to the barrier removal obligations of existing facilities.

Companion Seat A conventional seat that accommodates a companion to a person using a wheelchair or scooter. The 2010 ADA Standards requires one companion seat but it also says the customer may purchase up to three if other customers are allowed to purchase up to that many or more. The seats should be next to each other and in the same row so long as seats are available. If they are not available, the venue should give the customer a choice of nearby seats.

Cross Slope The slope that is perpendicular to the direction of pedestrian travel. For the cross slope of an accessible route, the maximum slope allowed is 1:48. High cross slope can make navigation difficult for manual chair users, people using crutches or canes and people with limited stability or strength.

(CVAA) Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (2010). CVVA brings federal laws requiring communications and video programming accessibility up to date, fills in accessibility gaps and ensures the inclusion of people with disabilities in daily living through accessible, affordable, and usable communication and video programming technologies. The legislation requires smart phones, television programs, and other modern communications technologies to be accessible to people with vision or hearing loss. Given the growing trend of using smart phones as a means of providing exhibit and navigation

information in museums, the CVAA helps to ensure its accessibility. Another cultural example would be full-length broadcast performances offered on the Internet after initial broadcast must be captioned under the CVAA.

Designation Signage Interior and exterior signs identifying permanent rooms and spaces. Applies to signs that provide designation labels, or names for interior rooms or spaces where the sign is not likely to change over time. Examples include interior signs labeling restrooms, room and floor numbers or letters, and room names. Tactile text descriptors are required for pictograms that are provided to label or identify a permanent room or space. Pictograms that provide information about a room or space, such as ‘no smoking’, occupant logos, and the International Sign of Accessibility, are not required to have text descriptors.

Detectable Warning A standardized textured surface built in or applied to walking surfaces or other elements that warn of hazards on a circulation path.

Direct Threat A significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services.

Directional Signage and Information Signage Signs that provide direction to or information about spaces and facilities of the site.

Disability/Individual with a Disability Any person who has a physical or mental condition that substantially limits one or more major life activity; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment.

Effective Communication A practice in which whatever information is written, spoken, or visually conveyed is as clear and understandable to people with disabilities as it is for people who don’t have disabilities.. This applies to private and public entities. Public entities have an additional obligation to give primary consideration to the individual’s choice when determining what is ‘effective.’

Employee Work Area Areas within any kind of employment setting used exclusively by employees.

Equivalent Facilitation Use of designs, products, or technologies as alternatives to those prescribed, provided they result in substantially equivalent or greater accessibility and usability. Demonstrating equivalent facilitation, in the event of a challenge, rests with the responsible party. There is no process for certifying that an alternative design provides equivalent facilitation.

Existing Facility A physical structure in existence on any given date, regardless of whether the building has been in place for a period of time, is newly constructed or that may have been altered.

Fundamental Alteration A change that is so significant that it alters the essential nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations offered. This is a condition allowed in both Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act when evaluating reasonable modification of policies, practices, and procedures.

Grievance Procedures A formal system for making and resolving complaints of disability discrimination (by employees or anyone who uses an organization's programs, services, or activities) in a prompt and fair manner, required by those with responsibilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and under Title II (state and local governments) of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Integrated Setting The mandate for integrated setting for people with disabilities is a core concept of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and is reinforced by the Olmstead Act. An integrated setting enables people with disabilities to interact with nondisabled persons to the fullest extent possible. Separate programs are permitted where necessary to ensure equal opportunity. A separate program must be appropriate to the particular individual. However, individuals with disabilities cannot be excluded from the regular program, or required to accept special programs, services or benefits.

Interpreter

Sign Language Interpreter A person who is trained in American Sign Language (ASL) or other visually interactive language that uses a combination of hand motions, body gestures, and facial expression. Specially trained people perform sign language interpretation. There are several different types of sign language, including American Sign Language and Signed English.

Oral Interpreter Interpreters specially trained to articulate speech silently and clearly, sometimes rephrasing words or phrases to give higher visibility on the lips. Natural body language and gestures are also used. Not all people who are deaf or hard of hearing are trained in sign language. Some are trained in speech reading (lip reading) and can understand spoken words more clearly with assistance from an oral interpreter.

Cued Speech Interpreter A cued speech interpreter functions in the same manner as an oral interpreter except that he or she also uses a hand code, or cue, to represent each speech sound.

International Symbol of Accessibility Icon indicating building features that are suitable for people with disabilities. The ADA Standards of 2010 require that a standard icon only be used where it is required.

Kerning Term used in typesetting and graphics regarding the spacing between two character letters and pertinent to legibility and readability of the letters.

Large Print A sans serif font (e.g., Arial, Helvetica) and type size (minimum 18-20 point) commonly used by people with visual impairment or who are legally blind.

Maintenance of Accessible Features The requirement that certain features of facilities and equipment be readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities and be kept in operable working condition. Accessible features cannot be reversed. It does not prohibit isolated or temporary interruptions in service or access due to maintenance or repairs.

Major Life Activity Activities that an average person can perform with little or no difficulty, including functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, and bodily functions. The ADA Amendments Act of 2008 clarified that major life activities also include major bodily functions.

Modification of Policies and Procedures Changes to existing policies and procedures to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities and ensure equal access to goods, services, and activities offered to others.

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity A condition describing people who have sensitivity to low-level everyday chemicals (e.g., perfumes, solvents, cleaning products, and volatile organic compounds [VOCs]) common in paint, fabrics, and materials). Individual tolerances vary but the condition can be disabling.

Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices (acronym: OPDMD) The category of mobility device is defined in the 2010 ADA Standards as "any mobility device powered by batteries, fuel, or other engines... that is used by individuals with mobility disabilities for the purpose of locomotion, including golf carts, electronic personal assistance mobility devices... such as the Segway[®] Personal Transporter, or any mobility device designed to operate in areas without defined pedestrian routes, but that is not a wheelchair." When an OPDMD is being used by a person with a mobility disability, different rules apply under the ADA than when it is being used by a person without a disability. Wheelchairs and scooters must be permitted in any area open to pedestrians. "Other power-driven mobility devices" must be permitted to be used by a person with a disability unless the covered entity can demonstrate that it cannot be operated in accordance with legitimate safety requirements.

Path of Travel A continuous, unobstructed pedestrian route for reaching, entering, or exiting a destination within a building (such as restrooms, exhibits, performance halls, shops, restaurants, information desks, study carrels) that connects to the external path of travel including sidewalks, streets, and parking areas.

Program Accessibility The extent to which programs and activities as well as services and benefits are readily accessible and usable by persons with disabilities when each type is viewed in its entirety.

Protruding Objects Solid materials that extend into circulation paths from the side or from posts, or objects that overhang circulation paths and do not provide clear headroom. Objects with a leading edge more than 27” and not more than 80” above the finished floor or ground should not extend more than 4” horizontally into the circulation path. Exhibit designs are major areas for risk of protruding objects. An unprotected area underneath stairways may also be a protruding object.

Place of Public Accommodation A private entity that owns, leases (or leases to), or operates as any of the following:

- 1) Places of lodging (e.g., inns, hotels, motels) (except for owner-occupied establishments renting fewer than six rooms);
- 2) Establishments serving food or drink (e.g., restaurants and bars);
- 3) Places of exhibition or entertainment (e.g., motion picture houses, theaters, concert halls, stadiums);
- 4) Places of public gathering (e.g., auditoriums, convention centers, lecture halls);
- 5) Sales or rental establishments (e.g., bakeries, grocery stores, hardware stores, shopping centers);
- 6) Service establishments (e.g., Laundromats, dry-cleaners, banks, barber shops, beauty shops, travel services, shoe repair services, funeral parlors, gas stations, offices of accountants or lawyers, pharmacies, insurance offices, professional offices of health care providers, hospitals);
- 7) Public transportation terminals, depots, or stations (not including facilities relating to air transportation);
- 8) Places of public display or collection (e.g., museums, libraries, galleries);
- 9) Places of recreation (e.g., parks, zoos, amusement parks);
- 10) Places of education (e.g., nursery schools; elementary, secondary, undergraduate, or postgraduate private schools);
- 11) Social service center establishments (e.g., day care centers, senior citizen centers, homeless shelters, food banks, adoption agencies); and
- 12) Places of exercise or recreation (e.g., gymnasiums, health spas, bowling alleys, golf courses).

Qualified Interpreter An interpreter who, via a video remote interpreting (VRI) service or an on-site appearance, is able to interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary. Qualified interpreters are most commonly sign language interpreters but others may specialize in oral interpretation or cued speech. Interpreters using oral or cued speech are likely to serve people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing along a continuum that involves some signing, some lip-reading, and some vocalization.

Qualified Person with a Disability Qualified people with disabilities meet the definition of ‘Disability / Individual with a Disability’ (see above). In addition to meeting the definition, for purposes of receiving services, education, employment, or training, qualified people with disabilities are those who meet normal and essential eligibility requirements for those services and positions. This term references the nondiscrimination provision for people with disabilities

in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. For purposes of employment, qualified people with disabilities can, with or without reasonable accommodation, perform the essential functions of the job.

Qualified Reader A person who is able to read effectively, accurately, and impartially for a person with a disability using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

Readily Achievable Easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense.

Reasonable Accommodation A modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things usually are done that enables a qualified individual with a disability to enjoy an equal employment opportunity. Both Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA title I use the term specifically related to employment. However, “reasonable” is commonly paired with accommodation as an adjective rather than a legal term in settings such as learning environments. The process of determining accommodations is a dynamic, individualized process in both cases.

Remote Video Interpreting – See Video Interpreting Services (VIS)

Safe Harbor A provision within ADA 2010 Standards that clarifies that an entity that has met previous federal design standards for accessible design does not need to update to the ADA 2010 Standards unless there is an alteration to the facility.

Screen Reader A computer program that speaks written text and allows a person to listen to the written text on a webpage or in a computer program. Screen readers read only text; they cannot describe pictures or other images, including images that are pictures of text.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended This federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs conducted by federal agencies, in federal employment, and in the employment practices of federal contractors. Section 504 forbids discrimination against people with disabilities in any activity or program that receives federal financial assistance.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (1998) Congress amended the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to require federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology (EIT) accessible to people with disabilities.

Service Animal Any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals under the ADA. Note that miniature horses are *not* considered service animals, but an individual may request a reasonable modification to use a miniature horse in

some circumstances. See: <http://adata.org/faq/i-heard-miniature-horses-are-considered-be-service-animals-ada-true>

Shadow Interpreting An alternative approach to sign language interpretation in which interpreters stay on the stage rather than off to the side. By incorporating interpreters into the performance itself, theaters aim to provide a more seamless experience for the entire audience.

Signage Displayed verbal, symbolic, tactile, and pictorial information.

Tactile An object or sign that can be perceived using the sense of touch.

Tax Credit (Disabled Access Credit) This tax credit, established under Section 44 of the Internal Revenue Code, was created in 1990 specifically to help small businesses cover ADA-related access expenditures. More: <http://www.ada.gov/taxincent.htm>

Tax Deduction A reduction in taxes owed by a businesses of any size when they have incurred costs for the removal of architectural or transportation barriers. Under Internal Revenue Code, Section 190, businesses can take a business expense deduction of up to \$15,000 per year for costs of removing barriers in facilities or vehicles. The renovations must comply with applicable accessibility standards. More: <http://www.ada.gov/taxincent.htm>

Touch Tour A tour that utilizes tactile experiences and sound to access information traditionally perceived visually. It is often offered to people with low vision or who are blind, but also to people with cognitive disabilities and other conditions.

TTY (Teletypewriter) A device that is used with a telephone or computer equipment with TTY capability to communicate with persons with hearing disabilities or speech disabilities. TTYs are also called text telephones.

Undue Burden This term applies to a potential limitation to the obligation to program accessibility and means *significant difficulty or expense*. This is a provision in both Section 504 and the ADA. The term must be interpreted in context. A small house museum or community theater will not be held to the same standards of determining undue burden as a major museum or concert hall. Undue burden can change with a change of circumstances and should be re-evaluated on a case by case basis.

Universal Design A framework for the design of places, things, information, communication, and policy to be usable by the widest range of people operating in the widest range of situations without special or separate design.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) A set of principles for curriculum development that give all people equal opportunities to learn.

Universal Design for Instruction (UDI) The design of instruction of products and environments to be usable by all students, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

User/Expert Anyone with lived experience of functional limitation who has developed natural experience in dealing with the challenges of our physical, information, communication, policy, and attitudinal/social environments.

Video Description Audio-narrated descriptions of a television, film, or video production's key visual elements. These descriptions are inserted into natural pauses in the program's dialogue or may occur simultaneously for live performances with little dialogue. Video description may be live or recorded, spoken aloud or only audible through head phones for those that need it. Video description makes visual programming more accessible to people who are blind or have low vision.

Video Interpreting Services (VIS) also called **Video Remote Interpreting Services** The use of videoconferencing technology, equipment, and a high-speed Internet connection with sufficient bandwidth to provide the services of a qualified interpreter, usually located at a call center, to people at a different location. VIS is commonly used for seminars and conferences where live interpreters may be difficult to secure for the length of the event. To ensure that VRI is effective, the Department of Justice has established performance standards for VRI and requires training for users of the technology and other individuals involved with its use so that they may quickly and efficiently set up and operate the VRI system.

Video Relay Services (VRS) The use of video equipment enables people who use sign language to communicate with voice telephone users through a relay service. VRS may only be used when consumers are connecting with one another through a telephone connection. This is a technique for person to person communication.

Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) An interpreting service that uses video conference technology over dedicated lines or wireless technology offering high-speed, wide-bandwidth video connection that delivers high-quality video images. This is an efficient option for short conversations with people who use American Sign Language when the content and length of the exchange doesn't warrant hiring an interpreter or when an interpreter cannot be procured.

Wheelchair A manually operated or power-driven device designed primarily for use by a person with a mobility disability for the main purpose of indoor, or both indoor and outdoor, locomotion. See also Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices.

Sources for definitions:

U.S. Department of Justice: <http://www.ada.gov>
www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/cjap3toolkit.htm
http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm

http://www.ada.gov/ticketing_2010.htm

http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleII_2010/titleII_2010_regulations.htm#a35137

U.S. Department of Education Chapter III: - 34 CFR 361.5 (b) (33), Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education: <http://cfr.vlex.com/vid/5-applicable-definitions-19760712>

U.S. Access Board: <http://www.access-board.gov>

Access IT - The National Center on Accessible Information Technology in Education: <http://www.washington.edu/accessit/>

American Council of the Blind: <http://www.acb.org>

CAST: <http://www.cast.org>

Federal Communication Commission: <http://www.fcc.gov>

National Association of the Deaf: <http://www.nad.org>

National Center on Accessibility: <http://www.ncaonline.org>